

DELAWARE EQUINE NEWS

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President's Message

The Delaware Equine Council would like to thank Dr. Carissa Wickens and University of Delaware staff members for hosting our April 19, 2010, business meeting along with an educational barn tour of their facility. All participants enjoyed the tour and the excellent information that was provided.

The show and trail-riding season is in full swing! To ensure that you protect our trail riding privileges, please be sure to ride only on marked trails and to clean up parking areas before you leave.

The DEC booth and mascot, Liberty, have been very busy at various functions and will continue to make appearances throughout the year. If anyone has any interest in assisting at the booth, please contact any board member to become involved. We are a volunteer organization and help is always appreciated.

Mark your calendar for the October Delaware Trail Summit in Rehoboth Beach. More information will be forthcoming.

Finally, we would like to thank the Delaware Quarter Horse Association and the American Quarter Horse Association for naming the Delaware Equine Council as recipient of the proceeds from the May 2, 2010, ride from the Hitching Post in Harrington. It was an enjoyable time for all participants.

Stan Vonasek

Safety Column

We've had a lot of columns about barn safety, trailer safety and safe practices when we handle horses. I think it's time we look at safety equipment for the rider.

First, let's look at helmets. Do you use a helmet? Is it a horse helmet?

How often horse-related injuries happen:

- * About 70,000 people go to the emergency room each year for equestrian-related injuries. About 12,000 of those people have suffered head injuries.
- * Among lifetime riders (people who ride 6 or more times a year), 13% have been hospitalized with a riding injury.
- * Horseback riders have the same number of injury accidents per riding hour as motorcycle riders.

How often horse-related injuries happen:

- * All riding disciplines have a significant rate of head injuries.
- * Unpredictable riding events — a horse spooking, bucking, or bolting — account for most head injuries, but 20% happen during non-riding activities or as a bystander. Wear your helmet when around horses even if you are not mounted.
- * Your level of expertise doesn't protect you: The risk of injury is tied to cumulative riding time, not level of expertise.
- * Taking it slow isn't the answer either: Severity of injury is most closely influenced by your distance above the ground. And a fall from above only 2 feet high can cause permanent brain damage.

How helmets protect you:

- * When you take a fall, a certified helmet absorbs energy by crushing and extending your heads stopping time to reduce the peak impact on the brain significantly.
- * Head injuries are the most common reason for equestrian-related hospitalization and fatal injuries.

The helmets are built to compress and fracture on serious impact. A broken helmet is not a sign of a faulty one — in fact, they may crush or crack as they absorb the energy that could otherwise cause you serious injury.

**Submitted by Mary Everhart
from troxelhelmets.com**